

Managing, predicting and preventing demand for children's services

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<http://adcs.org.uk/regions/west-midlands.html>

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MANAGING, PREDICTING AND PREVENTING DEMAND FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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Increasing demand

Children on Child Protection Plans 2007 and 2013						
	2007			2013		Increase (%)
	Starts in 2006/07	At 31.3.07		Starts in 2012/13	At 31.3.13	Starts At Year End
ENGLAND						
Numbers	23700	27900		52,700	43,100	122 54
Rates per 10,000	21.4	25.2		46.2	37.9	116 50
WEST MIDLANDS						
Numbers	2760	3490		6700	5200	143 49
Rates per 10,000	22.9	28.9		53.7	42.1	134 46

Presentation Structure

1. Paul Bywaters

How does deprivation influence rates of children's services interventions (CPP and LAC), at the whole LA level and at the small neighbourhood level.

Can rates of children's services interventions be reduced and can inequalities in rates be reduced, by addressing social inequalities, social deprivation?

Presentation Structure

2. Chandan Kaur

Is there a mathematical relationship between a given level of economic activity in a local authority area and the numbers of LAC they can expect?

If there is such a relationship, would it enable managers to predict a growth or reduction in demand for LAC services based on a measure of local economic activity.

Presentation Structure

What the two projects have in common is:

- a focus on the relationship between deprivation and demand for services
- a focus on populations and systems rather than individual cases.

The key question:

Can demand be predicted, managed and even reduced, by addressing deprivation?

Coventry Study funded by the Nuffield Foundation: Deprivation and Children's Services Outcomes

Aim:

to examine the role of deprivation in explaining differences in key children's services' interventions between and within local authorities (LAs)

Objectives:

- to relate core markers of safeguarding processes (the rates of LAC and CPP) to Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores for small areas within LAs by re-analysing routinely collected and new data
- to begin to explore the implications of the analysis for the allocation of resources, workforce skills and intervention strategies;
- to design a programme of subsequent studies to explore these issues further.

Sample

14 Local Authorities in the English Midlands

Over 10% of all children England and of LAC and CPP

Routine data for all CPP and LAC: age, gender, ethnicity, disability, reason for CPP and legal status in LAC at 31.3.12

plus

Neighbourhood (Lower Layer Super Output Area) of origin.

Interviews with senior managers to provide contextual information.

Key Findings 1: Very Large Inequalities

Very large inequalities in children's chances of being on a child protection plan or being a looked after child systematically and significantly related to deprivation levels.

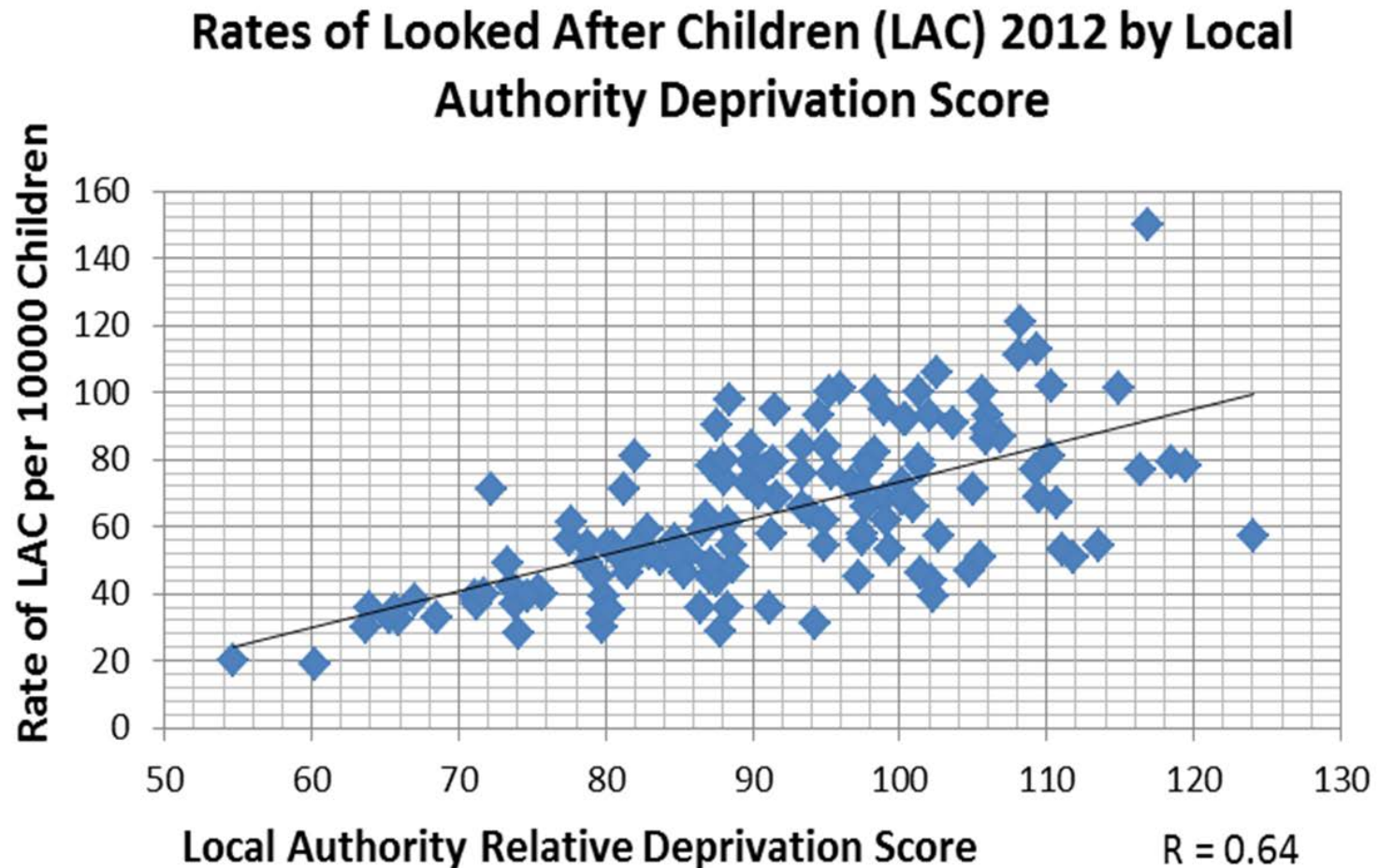
From published data:

A child in Blackpool had an 8 times greater chance of being a LAC at 31.3.13 than a child in Richmond Upon Thames.

A child in Coventry had a 2.3 times greater chance of being on a CPP at 31.3.13 than a child in Staffordshire.

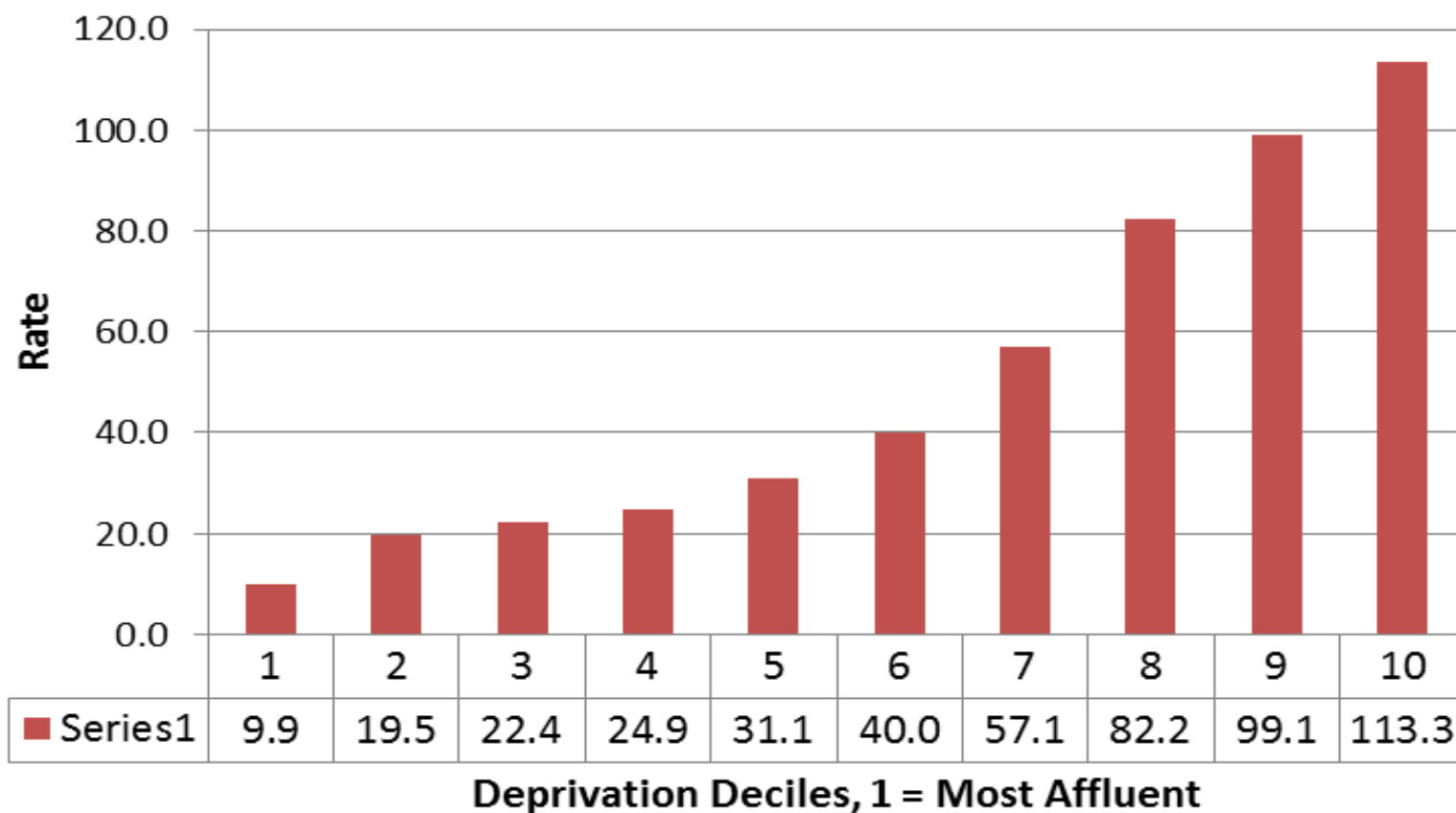
A child in Wolverhampton had a 3 times greater chance of being looked after than a child in Shropshire

Child Welfare Inequalities: England



Key Findings 1: Very large inequalities

Looked After Children Rates per 10,000 Children by Deprivation Decile, Midlands Sample, 31.3.12

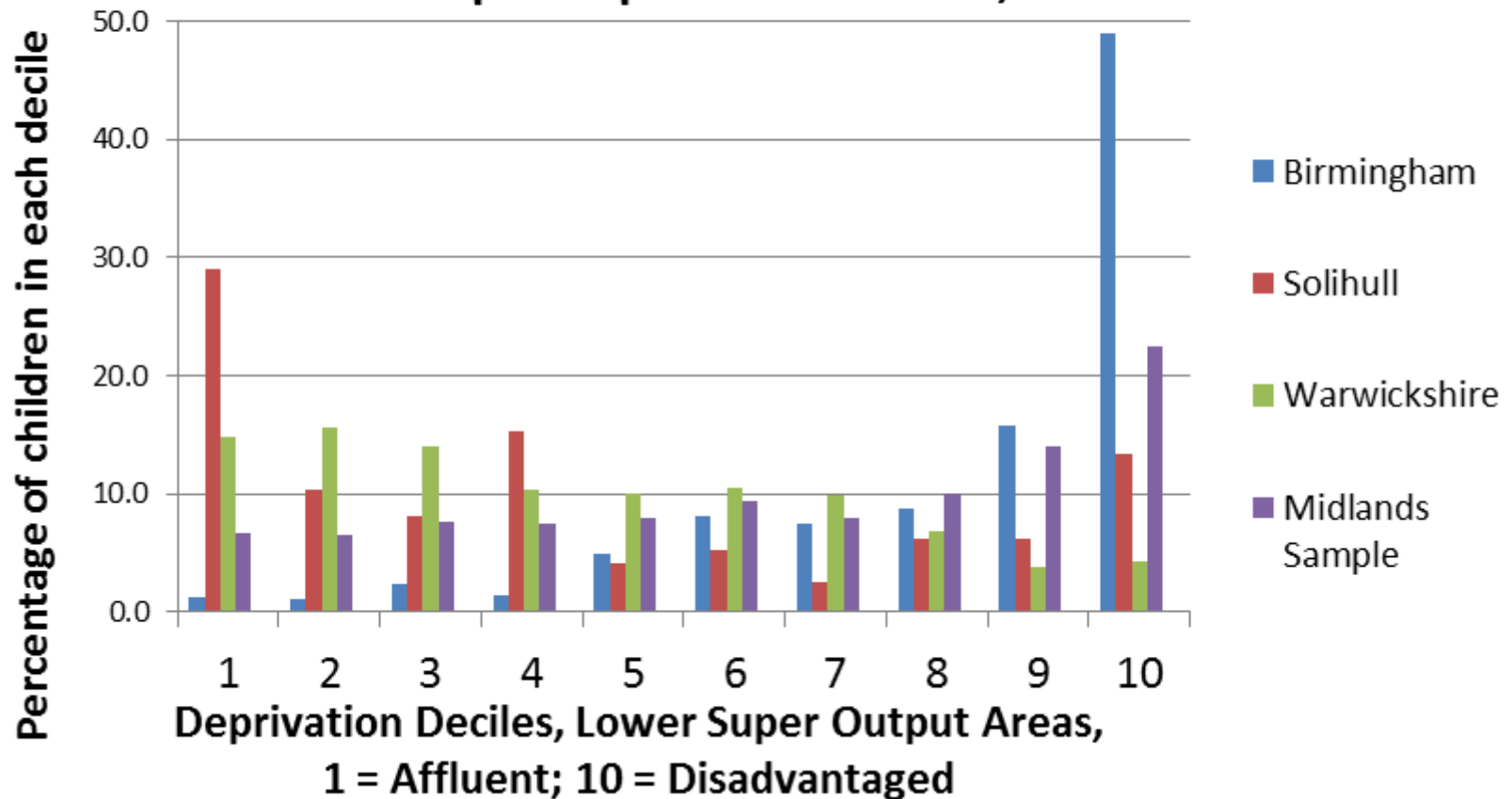


Child Welfare Inequalities: Definition

Unequal chances, experiences and outcomes of child welfare that are systematically associated with social advantage/disadvantage.

Key Findings 1: Very large inequalities in population patterns

Child (0-17) Population Percentages by Index of Multiple Deprivation Deciles, 2011



Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

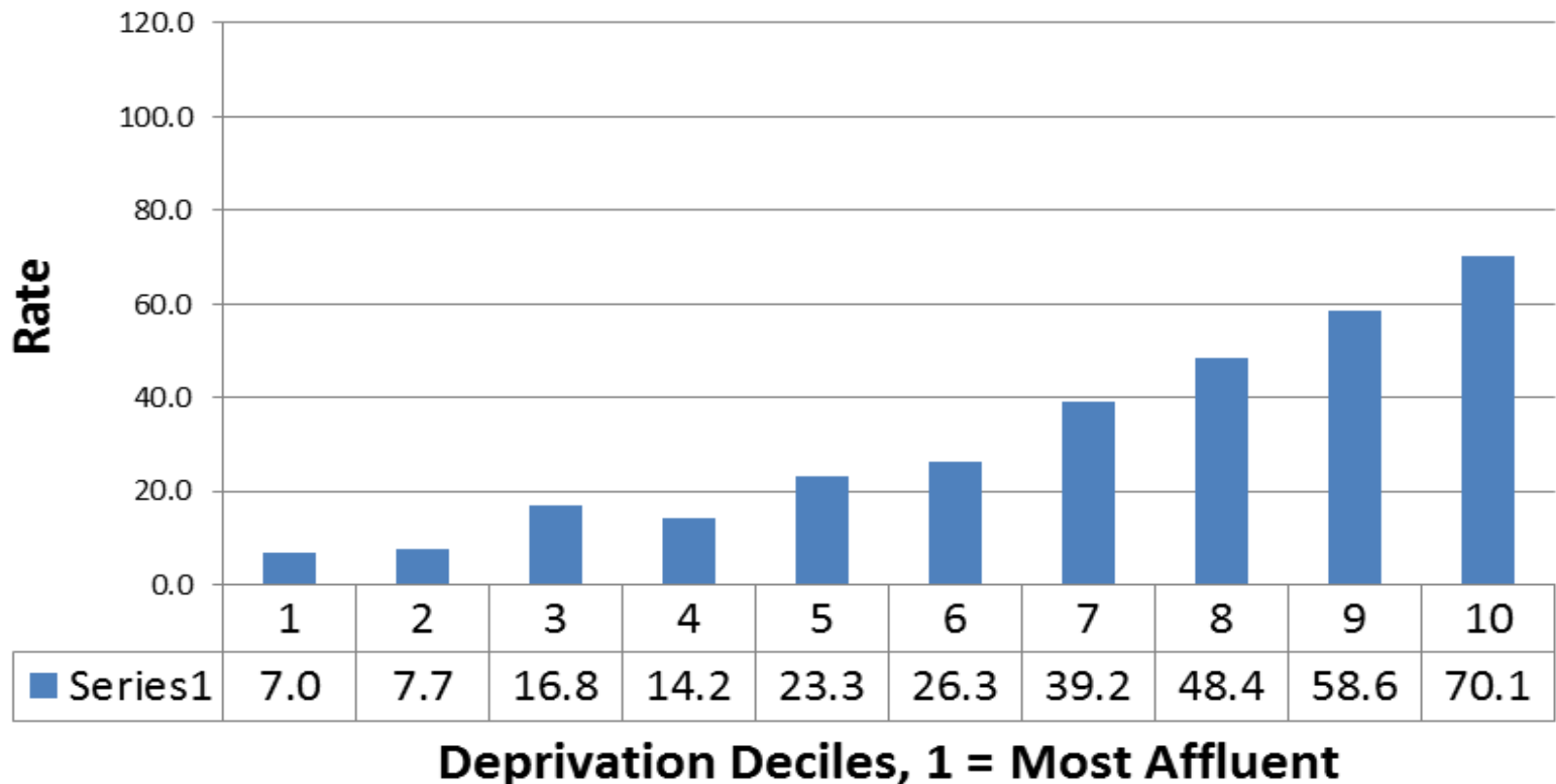
There is a gradient in rates across levels of deprivation, just as there is a gradient in other outcomes (health, education) for children across the whole of society: CPP and LAC are not found only in areas of high deprivation.

60% of CPP and LAC live in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods.

Therefore 40% live in more affluent 80% of neighbourhoods.

Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

Child Protection Plan Rates per 10,000 Children, by Deprivation Decile, Midlands Sample, 31.3.12



Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

Child safeguarding is not only about families in poverty.

Reducing inequalities in rates between and within areas is a possible policy objective underpinned by social work's commitment to social justice.

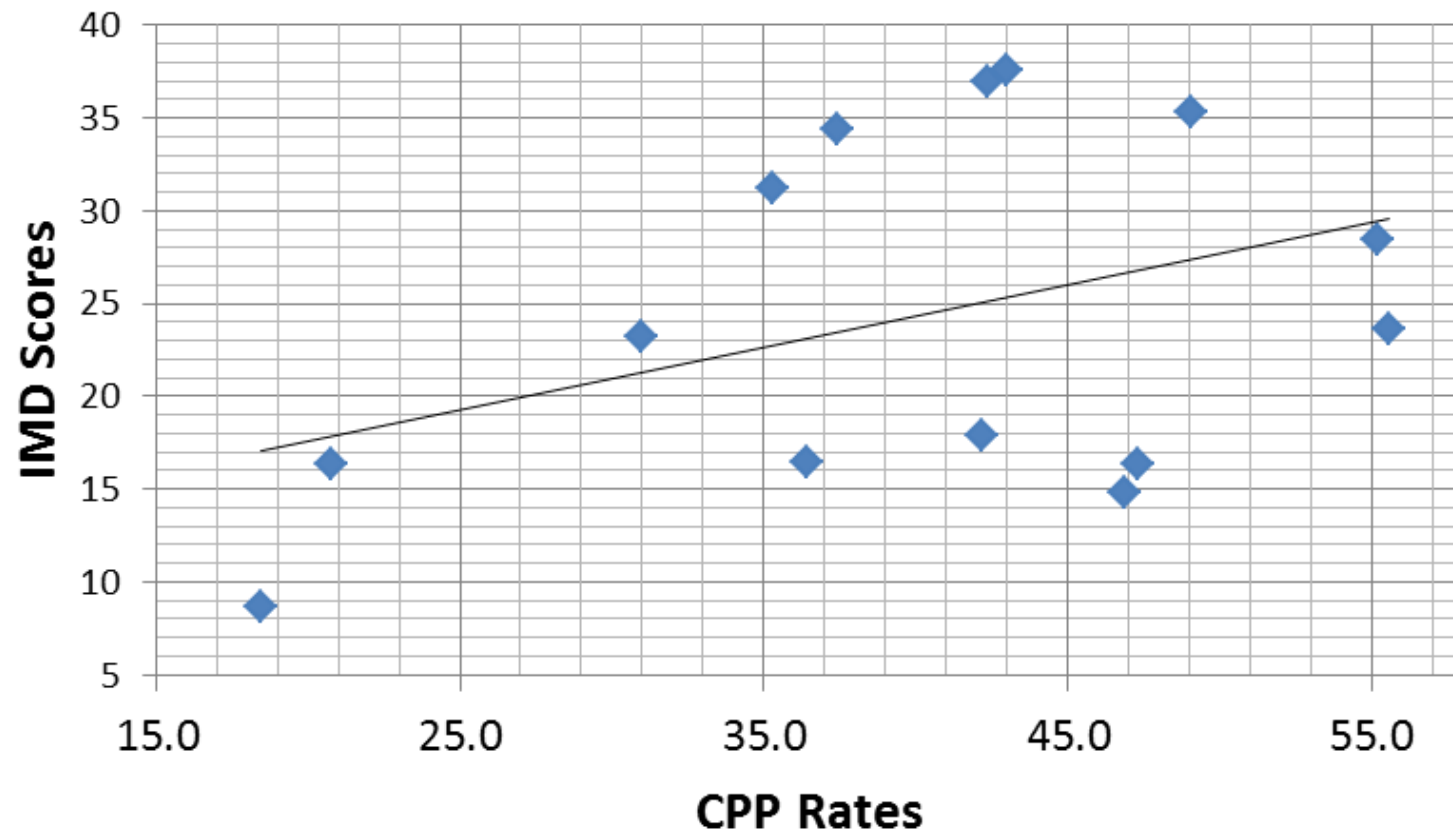
If we could reduce the steepness of the gradient of deprivation or the impact of deprivation on family life, we could reduce the demands on children's services.

Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

Overall a child's chances of an extreme child welfare intervention is much greater at higher levels of deprivation, but **for a given level of deprivation a child in a more affluent local authority is more likely to be on a CPP or to be a looked after child.**

Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

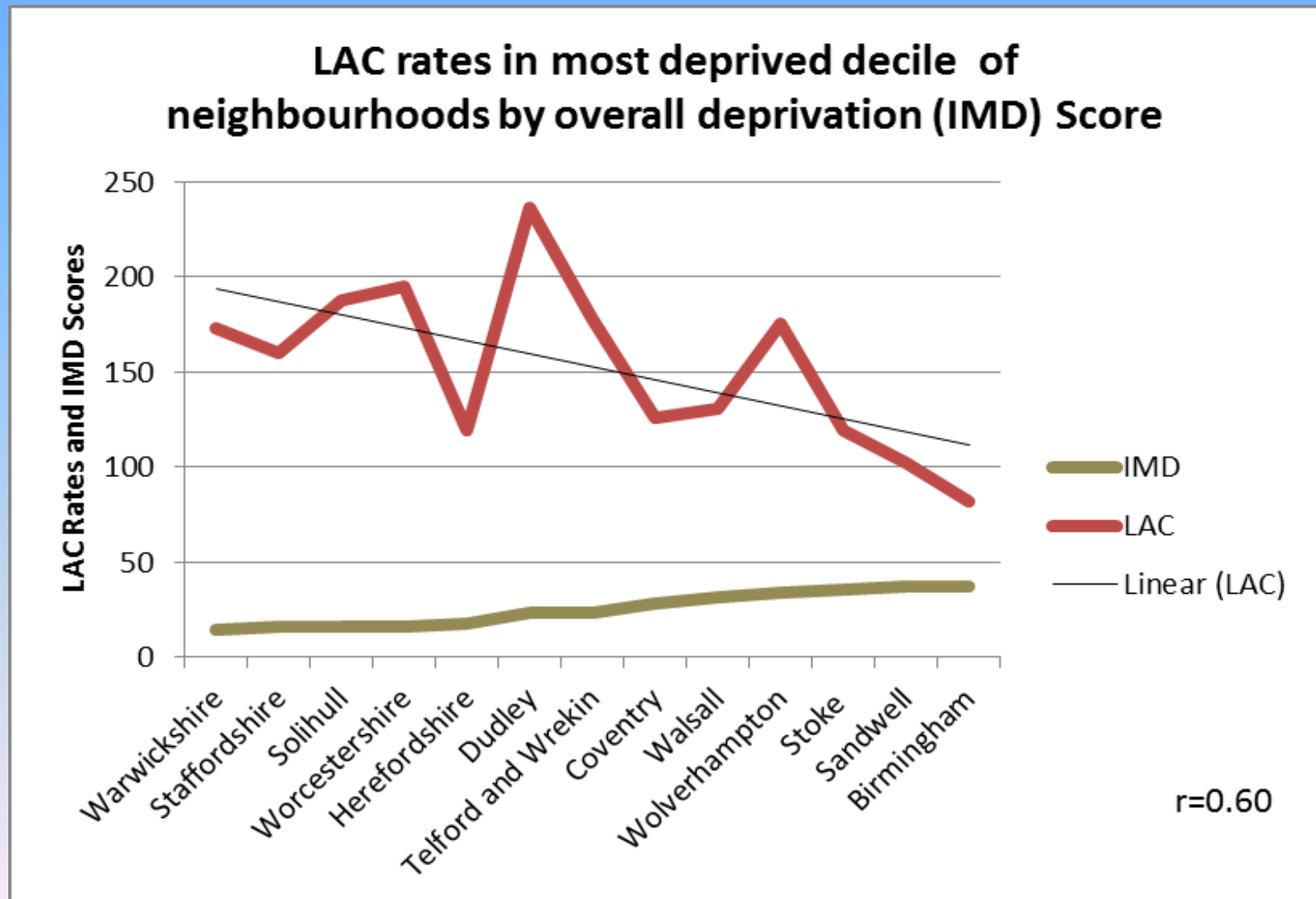
**CPP Rates for Sample of 14 Midlands Local Authorities
at 31.3.12 by Index of Multiple Deprivation Scores**



Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

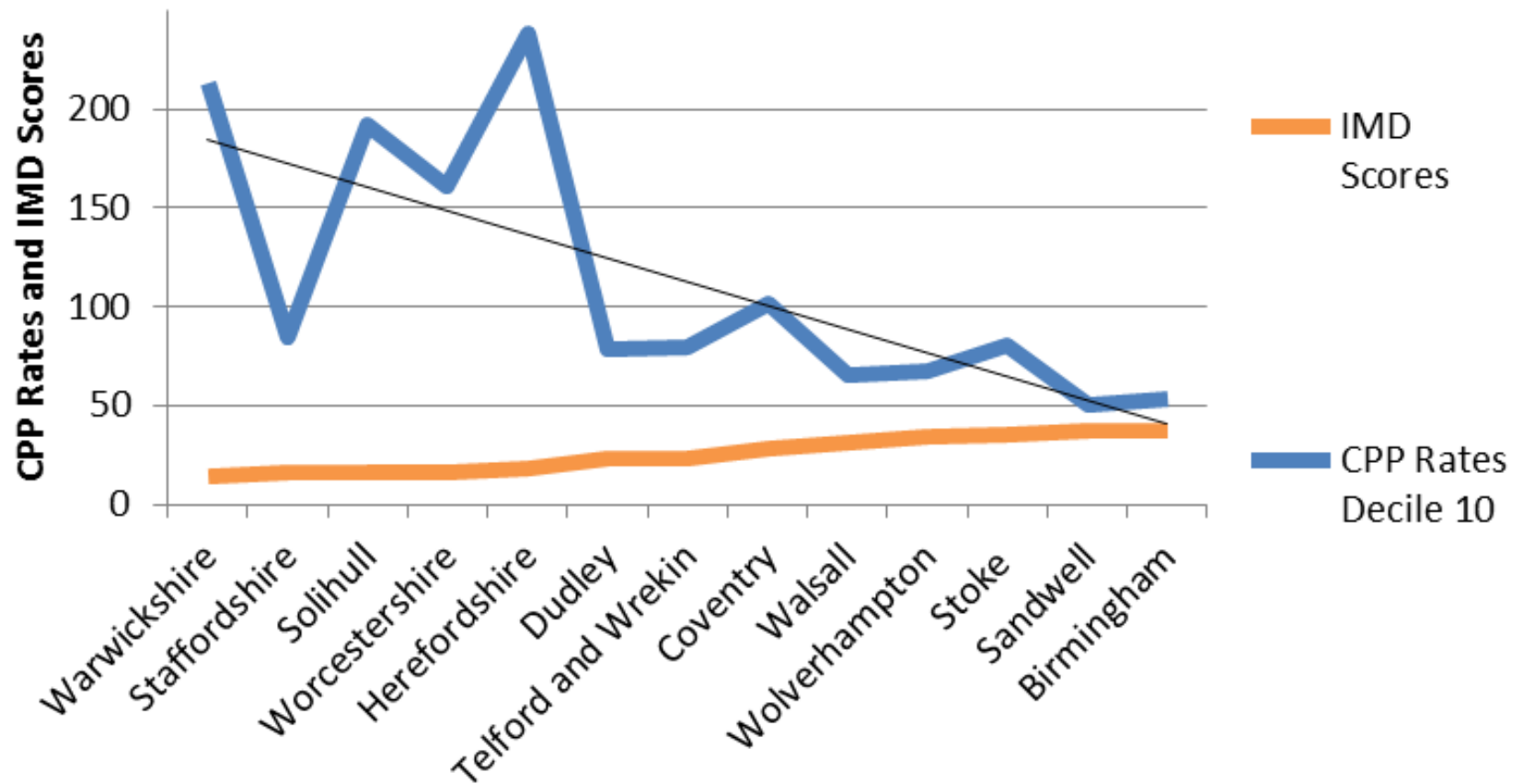
		IMD Scores	CPP Rate in 10th Decile	Overall CPP Rate
Herefordshire		17.9	238.1	42.2
Sandwell		37	51.0	42.4
Wolverhampton		34.4	67.1	37.4
Worcestershire		16.4	161.4	36.4

Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law



Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

CPP Rates in the most deprived decile of neighbourhoods by overall deprivation (IMD) score.



Findings

Gross inequalities in children's life chances are being reflected in children's services rates.

These inequalities cannot be resolved only by paying attention to the most deprived neighbourhoods.

Reducing inequalities in rates is a possible policy goal as it is in health policy.

It appears that there is an inverse care law: that more affluent LAs intervene in children's lives more than relatively disadvantaged LAs for the same level of deprivation.

Can anything be done?

Two kinds of things in principle:

Reducing the levels of deprivation faced by children

Minimising the link between deprivation and CS interventions (NB low rates may not mean safer children)

Can anything be done?

1. Rebalance the allocation of central government funds to local government for children's services towards areas of higher deprivation
2. Reprioritise the allocation of all local resources by local councils – not only children's services but education, health, housing, employment, transport resources to reduce inequalities between LA areas
3. Reorder the allocation of children's services resources to focus on breaking the link between deprivation and on reducing inequalities in child welfare.

Emerging questions

- Can child welfare services avoid replicating or reinforcing patterns of social inequality (social position, social identity, geography)?
- How can the need for extreme state interventions in family life be prevented by ensuring good development for more children?

The key question

Do we know whether our child safeguarding systems are successful?

If rates of looked after children are 50% higher in Wales than in England and 23% more children proportionately are on the Welsh child protection register, does that mean that children are better protected in Wales or less well protected?

Is the 150% increase in the proportion of children starting a CPP in the midlands over the last six years a positive or negative sign of children's wellbeing? Are children safer?

Should more or less children be taken into care in Herefordshire or Birmingham, in Staffs or in Dudley?